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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/842,496	04/25/2001	Fabio Casati	10007893-1	7375

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EXAMINER	
NANO, SARGON N	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2157	

DATE MAILED: 03/02/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/842,496	CASATI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Sargon N. Nano	2157	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *22 June 2005*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1 - 10, 15 - 34, 37 - 42* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) *11 - 14 , and 35 - 36* is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1 - 10, 15 - 34, 37 - 42* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

Response to amendment

1. This office action is responsive to RCE filed on Dec.6, 2005. Claims 1 – 10 and 15 – 34, 37 – 42 are presented for examination. Claims 11 – 14, 35 and 36 were canceled. Claims 37 – 42 were newly presented.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1 – 10 and 15 – 34 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gabbita et al U.S. Patent No. 6,349,238. (referred to hereafter as Gabbita).

As to claim 1, Gabbita teaches a computer-enabled workflow process system, comprising:

a node group database that stores a group of work nodes referred to by a generic node, wherein a work node defines a workflow action and data items to be read and written when executing the workflow action (see col. 2 lines 22 – 43, Gabbita discloses a database of workflow diagrams that is needed to process an order);

a workflow engine that executes a workflow process having the generic node, wherein the workflow engine accesses the node group database for the group of work

nodes when the generic node is to be executed so as to allow dynamic composition and modification of the workflow process(see col. 2 lines 22 - 43 Gabbita discloses an appropriate work plan based on information contained within the service order).

As to claim 2, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 1, wherein work nodes can be added to or removed from the node group dynamically without requiring the workflow process to be redefined (see col. 3 lines 2 – 14).

As to claim 3, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 1, wherein the node group database stores a plurality of groups of work nodes, each being referred to by at least one generic node (see col.4 lines 36 – 55).

As to claim 4, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 3, wherein each generic node can refer to more than one group of work nodes (see col. 9 lines 1 – 29 and fig.2).

As to claim 5, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 1, wherein the workflow engine further comprises a static instance manager that manages execution of work nodes within the workflow process; an adaptive instance manager that accesses the node group database for the group of work nodes to replace the generic node (see col. 5 lines 19 – 48).

As to claim 6, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 5, wherein the adaptive instance manager receives attributes of the generic node to determine which work nodes within the group are to replace the generic node (see col. 9 lines 1 – 29).

As to claim 7, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 5, wherein the adaptive instance manager further comprises:

a first set of instructions that receive attributes of the generic node from the group of work nodes; a second set of instructions that determine which work nodes within the group are described by the generic node (see col. 9 lines 1 – 37); a third set of instructions that replace the generic node with all of the work nodes within the group that are described by the generic node(see col.9, lines 1 – 37).

As to claim 8, Gabbita teaches in a workflow process management system, a computer-implemented method of executing a workflow process having at least a generic node, comprising

storing a group of work nodes corresponding to the generic node in a node group database, wherein the node group database stores a plurality of groups of work nodes, wherein a work node defining a workflow action and data items to be read and written when executing the workflow action; accessing the node group database for the group of work nodes when the generic node is to be executed (see col. 2 lines 22 – 43);

executing work nodes in the group such that the workflow process can be dynamically composed and modified without requiring that the workflow process be redefined(see col. 3 lines 2 – 14).

As to claim 9, Gabbita teaches the method of claim 8, wherein work nodes can be added to or removed from the group without redefining its corresponding workflow process (see col. 3 lines 2 – 14).

As to claim 10, Gabbita teaches the method of claim 8, further comprising the step of determining when the generic node in the workflow process is to be executed (see col. 9 lines 29 – 37).

As to claim 15, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 1, wherein one of the work nodes defines a workflow action of collecting data for the workflow process (see col. 9 lines 14 – 29 & abstract).

As to claim 16, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 1, wherein the workflow process defines a moving service (see col. 18 lines 41 – 58).

As to claim 17, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 1, wherein the workflow process is an automation of a business process during which documents and information are passed from one participant to another participant (see fig. 1C).

As to claim 18, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 1, wherein at least one work flow node replaces the generic node during execution of the workflow process (see col. 11 lines 29 – 43).

As to claim 19, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 1, wherein attributes in the generic node govern which work nodes within the group of work nodes will replace the generic node during execution of the workflow process (see col. 9 lines 60 – col. 10 line 10).

As to claim 20, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 1, wherein the node group database includes work=flow actions that specify different shipping services (see col.18 lines 41 – 50).

As to claim 21, Gabbita teaches the method of claim 8, further comprising collecting data with one of the work nodes during execution of the workflow process (see abstract and fig.1C).

As to claim 22, Gabbita teaches the method of claim 8, wherein the workflow process defines a moving service (see col. 18 lines 41 – 50).

As to claim 23, Gabbita teaches the method of claim 8, further comprising exchanging documents and information during the workflow process (see fig. 1C).

As to claim 24, Gabbita teaches the method of claim 8, further comprising replacing the generic node with a work flow node during execution of the workflow process (see col.11 lines 29 – 43).

As to claim 25, Gabbita teaches the method of claim 8, further comprising specifying, in attributes in the generic node, which work nodes within the group of work nodes will replace the generic node during execution of the workflow process (see col.11 lines 29 – 43).

As to claim 26, Gabbita teaches the method of claim 8, wherein the node group database includes workflow actions that specify different shipping services (see col. 18 lines 41 – 50).

As to claim 27, Gabbita teaches a computer-enabled workflow process system, comprising: a node group database that stores plural work nodes, wherein each work node defines a different workflow action (see col.2 lines 22 – 43); a generic node having attributes that identify which work nodes are activated to replace the generic node during execution of a workflow process (see col.2 lines 22 – 43); and a workflow engine that executes the workflow process having the generic node, wherein the workflow engine accesses, when the generic node is to be executed, the node group database

to replace the generic node with at least one work node and to initiate the workflow action of the at least one work node(see fig. 1 B and col. 5 line 60 – col. 6 line 19) .

As to claim 28, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 27, wherein plural work nodes are activated to replace the generic node during execution of the workflow process (see col. 11 lines 29 – 43).

As to claim 29, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 28, wherein the plural work nodes activated to replace the generic node are executed in parallel (see col. 11 lines 29 – 43).

As to claim 30, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 28, wherein the plural work nodes activated to replace the generic node are sequentially executed. (see col.11 lines 29 – 43).

As to claim 31, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 27, wherein values of the attributes are set at runtime by a previously executed work node (see col. 14 lines 56 – 64).

As to claim 32, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 27, wherein the workflow actions include moving services (see col. 18 lines 41 – 58).

As to claim 33, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 27, wherein the work nodes include airline shipment and railway shipment (see col. 18 lines 41 – 58).

As to claim 34, Gabbita teaches the system of claim 27, wherein work nodes in the node group database specify services that are performed by third parties during execution of the workflow process (see fig.1C).

As to claim 37, the system of claim 1, wherein the workflow engine determines if the nodes are generic after commencing execution of the workflow process having generic node (see col. 5 lines 60 - 67).

As to claim 38, the system of claim 1, wherein different executions of a same generic node result in a different subset of work nodes being executed (see col. 9 line 14 – 51).

As to claim 39, the method of claim 8 further comprising: determining after executing work nodes in the generic nodes, if nodes in the workflow process are generic nodes (see col. 9 line 60 – col. 10 line 19).

As to claim 40, the method of claim 8 further comprising : executing the generic node more than one time while executing the workflow process (see col. 9 line 60 – col. 10 line 19).

As to claim 41, the method of claim 8 further comprising changing the configuration of the generic node while workflow process is being executed (see col. 2 lines 58 – 64).

As to claim 42, the system of claim 27, further comprising: plural generic nodes, wherein each of the generic nodes has attributes that identify which work nodes are to be activated (see col. 2 lines 29 – 43).

Response to Argument

3. Applicant's arguments have been considered but are not persuasive.

Applicant argues in substance that Gabbita does not disclose A) that a workflow engine accesses a database before a generic node is executed.

In response to A) Gabbita discloses a selection module (see fig. 1B item # 122) which resides in LSAT engine (workflow engine) accesses a database before a workflow process is executed (see fig. 1 B and col. 5 line 60 – col. 6 line 19 and col. 5 line 60 – 67), therefore Gabbita's disclosure meets the claimed limitation " a workflow engine accesses a database before the generic node is executed"

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sargon N. Nano whose telephone number is (571) 272-4007. The examiner can normally be reached on 8 hour.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ario Etienne can be reached on (571) 272-4001. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Sargon Nano

Feb. 6, 2006

ARIO ETIENNE
PRIMARY EXAMINER